ale

CAMRA

Cambridge & District Branch Newsletter Issue 413 July 2025

Winners all! Cambridge CAMRA award winning pubs

Kingston Arms: Cambridge CAMRA Pub of the Year and Cambridgeshire County Pub of the Year

Contents:

Pub News

Cambridge CAMRA Awards 2025

An Elysian view - Loos Interest

Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

Apples and Pears

A Game of Chess, Mate?

Midlands Meanderings: Walsall revisited

Paws for thought

The Lord Byron Inn

Eat - Drink - Sleep

We are a 17th century Inn and we offer a great range of local real ales always on tap, real ciders and craft ales. We have an excellent wine list, which compliments our delicious home cooked food. Free wi-fi.

A lovely large beer garden with a play area for children.

We have 9 en-suite B & B rooms at competitive rates.

Opening hours, Bar Mon 4pm-11pm, Tues - Sat 12pm-11pm Sun 12pm-10:30pm. Kitchen Mon 4pm-9pm, Tues - Sun 12pm-9pm

22 Church Lane, Trumpington, Cambridge, CB2 9LA

info@lordbyroninn.co.uk

(01223) 845102

lordbyroninn.co.uk

LordByronInn

Pub News

May and June are typically Cambridge CAMRA's busiest months. The buildup, hosting and, take down of our beer festival keeps us focussed for practically all of May. This year the weather was very kind, and we had a very good turn out of both volunteers and of customers. Final sums haven't been produced yet, but we are confident that sales are very good. We also managed to recruit several hundred new CAMRA members, which is of course, what the festival is all about.

Congratulations go to **Buntingford Brewery** whose "Tis but a Scratch' was voted the Beer of the Festival, and to Oakington cidery **Blue Barrel**, winners of the Cider and Perry of the Festival vote for their Cuckoos Return cider.

Our thanks to all our volunteers, the organisers, the brewery bars, the food suppliers and vendors, the site and cellar teams and to you, the customers, for making Cambridge the CAMRA festival that everyone looks forward to.

May is also the month we debate the merits of our potential award-winning pubs.

As you will have read in ALE 412, our major awards winners; Cider Pub of the Year (the **Devonshire Arms**, Devonshire Road), and Overall Pub of the Year (the **Kingston Arms**, Kingston Street) are announced in April. Both pubs were then put forward to compete for the title of County Pub of the Year, against champion pubs from Ely, Peterborough and Huntingdonshire branches. I'm please to tell you that both won and have now gone on to compete for the titles of East Anglian Cider Pub of the Year* and East Anglian Pub of the Year, where they will be facing competition from Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk winning pubs.

June sees us looking at other pubs and the various categories of awards that we like to give.

This culminates in an awards evening hosted by Sam and his team at the Portland Arms, Cambridge. An event which also gives us an opportunity to thank some of our otherwise unrecognised Real Ale Champions and long-serving publicans. To see the awards and who the winners are, turn to page 8.

Branch Diary

Don't forget that all Branch members are very welcome to attend the monthly business meetings, as well as our socials.

Saturday 19th July Strolling Social of Fulbourn and Cherry Hinton
Thursday 7th August Cambridge Cider and Perry Club
Tuesday 12th August Branch Meeting Red Lion Brinkley
Thursday 21st August Thursday Throng at the Free Press
Tuesday 9th September Branch Meeting Duke of Wellington, Willingham
For a fuller list of local events please check **cambridge-camra.org.uk/events/**.

For Consumer Advice:

If you have a complaint about goods or services, please contact Citizens Advice for information and advice: Visit the Citizens Advice Website
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/
Or you can call the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 03454 04 05 06
Please note: National Trading Standards cannot help members of the public with specific complaints or advice about goods, services or specific businesses.

Copyright CAMRA Cambridge & District Branch 2025. All rights reserved.
ALE is published by the Cambridge & District Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of CAMRA Ltd or its Branches.

Edited by Will Smith, 32 Lovell Road, Cambridge, CB4 2QR. email: **will.smith@cambridge-camra.org.uk**

Printed by Zenith Print **zenithprint.co.uk**

Photo credits: Paul Treadaway and Helge Nareid.

To Advertise

To place an advert or enquire about our rate card please contact: Neil Richards - 01536 358670, n.richards@btinternet.com

Copy date next edition 1 September 2025
Publication date 22 September 2025

Pub News

We have quite a list of new licensees to welcome in this issue:

Hello, Jennie Higgins who has taken over the **Chestnut Tree** at West Wratting. A recent visit to the pub showed a distinct lack of dark beers. We hope this won't always be the case.

Debbie Norman is now running the **Side Quest** in little Shelford.

The **Duke of Wellington**, Willingham has reopened as a free house. New licensees Paula and Graham are serving up to four cask ales. **Papworth Brewery** beer is proving to be liked by thirsty customers. (The Fen skater was especially good when I made my first visit.) This is handy, as the brewery, in Earith, is most definitely its closest supplier.

The **Lion and Lamb** in Milton also has a new landlord. Formerly a part of this year's award-winning **Kingston Arms** team, Richard will be hoping to bring all that he has learned to make his new pub a success.

A full refurbishment at the **Kings Head**, Fen Ditton, welcomed new tenants Dan and Marina Roberts when it opened on 20th June.

The **Lion at Ickleton** has at last opened its door. Managed by newcomers Vikki and Chris, the pub was under a threat of closure before being brought out by community shareholders. It will be run by a volunteer committee.

The **Red Lion**, Cherry Hinton, has two new permanent licensees. Simon and Kevin took over from temporary manager Miranda in May. Miranda has moved on to manage the **Barley Mow**, Histon. Both are Greene King HIVE pubs.

We have asked Star (Heineken) Pubs for an update on the status of the **Earl of Beaconsfield**, Mill Road and received the following reply. "*We absolutely plan to reopen this pub in the future, unfortunately we are unlikely to know what the plans are for the site for some time yet.*"

And now for some less happy news.

We are sorry to be losing some of our favourite landlords and ladies, three from award-winning pubs.

Phil and Mary, winners of the Cambridge CAMRA Dark Beer of the Year award in 2024, will be giving up their tenancy of the **Bell**, Balsham at the end of August.

Multi-award-winning manager Andy Pierce has left the **Red Lion**, Histon. He will be sorely missed

Lana and John are leaving our current Rural Pub of the Year the **Red Lion**, Swaffham Prior. Lana told us that she is really upset that they are going to leave as they love the village. They were offered an unrefusable opportunity to run a village free house close to Henley on Thames. They too will be leaving at the end of August. Owners Bateman's have, with John's help, already lined up a replacement tenant, so the pub shouldn't be closed for the change of licensee.

We've received confirmation that Helen will be leaving the **Sun Inn**, Waterbeach – possibly in December.

Hanks Dirty, Lensfield Road, Cambridge has closed, and new tenants are being sought.

The **Missing Sock**, Stow-cum-Quy is now called **KindaSock** and is opening only for events.

Planning permission has been sought for the **Anchor**, Burwell to install three cabins to the rear of the building.

And finally, alongside many local pub goers and residents we have placed an objection to the current application to convert the **Bank**, Willingham into a Chicken Shop. Branch Pubs Officer Ali Cook has listed several objections, but has also emphasised how important The Bank is to the local community: "*Converting the Bank Micropub to a chicken shop would be a loss not just to Willingham but to all drinkers who have known and loved it since it was established over 12 years ago.*"

*The judging for CAMRA East Anglia Regional Cider Pub of the Year has been completed – unfortunately the Devonshire Arms wasn't successful.

The Kingston Arms is the first city pub to be designated as an Asset of Community Value.It is the first city pub to be recognised for this level of protection.

The Railway Arms Saffron Walden

Recently saved from development by the local community and now:

CAMRA Essex Pub of the Year 2022

- A large selection of locally brewed real ales and ciders
- A fantastic wine offering
- Community-owned free house
- A traditional 'local' pub
- Large beer garden
- Great pub grub

Station Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 3HQ

The No 7 bus from Cambridge to Saffron Walden stops rights outside the pub

www.railwayarms.co.uk

- Nine Cask Ales
- Home cooked food Mon-Sat 12-9pm, Sun 12-8pm
- Pizza Shed Open Wed-Sun 5-9pm, Eat in or Takeaway
- Four high quality en-suite rooms in tranquil and secluded area
- Free Wi-Fi
- Annual beer festival - The Histon Beer Festival (Early September)

Eat Drink Sleep

RED LION FREEHOUSE

27 High Street, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9JD (01223 564437)

www.theredlionhiston.co.uk

theredlionhiston

Beer Festivals

Congratulations to the following pubs for their successful beer festivals: the **George**, Girton, the **Empress**, Thoday Street, the **Maypole**, Portugal Place, and the **Red Lion**, Swaffham Prior

Some excellent pub beer festivals dates to put in your diary:

- **Portland Arms**, Cambridge 7th-13th July
- **Queen Edith** 31 July - 2 August
- **CB1 Beer Quarter**, Multi-Venue 18-31 August
- **Black Horse**, Rampton Cider Festival 21-25 August
- **Plough and Fleece**, Horningsea 22nd - 25th August
- **Red Lion**, Histon 1st – 6th September
- **Dykes End**, Reach 19th -21st September

CAMRA Beer Festivals in East Anglia and neighbouring counties:

- Chelmsford Summer Beer & Cider Festival, 15-19 July 2025
- Epping Ongar Railway Real Ale Festival, Ongar, 25-27 July 2025
- Peterborough Beer Festival, 19-23 August 2025
- Clacton Real Ale & Cider Festival, 20-23 August 2025
- East Anglian Beer & Cider Festival, Bury St Edmunds, 20-25 August 2025
- Chappel Summer Beer Festival, 9-13 September 2025
- Booze on the Ouse Huntingdon, 18-20 September 2025
- St Albans Beer & Cider Festival, 24-27 September 2025
- Bedford Beer & Cider Festival, 1-4 October 2025

Campaigning for pubs, pints and people since 1971
Independence!
Craving it?
Get it on draught!
CAMRA, celebrating the UK's best beers and pubs.
Join CAMRA and go on an amazing exploration of great beers and pubs in the UK.
Discover benefits, discounts and tools that make it quick and enjoyable to find the beers you love and the great pubs that serve them. You also save on entry to over 160 CAMRA festivals.
Your membership supports the campaign to preserve quality beer, cider and perry, along with cherished pubs and clubs that bring us together.
Get £30 worth of beer vouchers every year as a single member and £40 for joint memberships!
FIND OUT MORE
Join CAMRA today
camra.org.uk/join
CAMRA

THE KINGSTON ARMS
"The City Local"

- Draught Bass, Tring Side Pocket, Osset White Rat plus up to five changing guest beers
- Two dark cask beers always available, one usually Batemans Dark M
- Draught German beers, four real ciders and changing 'Craft' beers
- Free WiFi
- Our handcrafted Pork Pies are probably ...

Crib & Skittle players always wanted

33 Kingston Street, Cambridge CB1 2NU

Monday-Saturday 11:00-23:00 (Friday 23:30), Sunday 12:00-22:30

info@thekingstonarms.co.uk

(01223) 323962

thekingstonarms.co.uk

GOOD BEER GUIDE 2026 WE'RE IN IT

THE REGAL wetherspoon

ALE WEDNESDAY

ALL TRADITIONAL ALES FROM £2.65 EVERY WEDNESDAY

THE REGAL WETHERSPOON CIDER FESTIVAL

27TH JUNE TO 6TH JULY

28TH JUNE - 6TH JULY

RUNNING ALONGSIDE THE CAMBRIDGE FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL

Winners All! - The Cambridge CAMRA Awards 2025

Our presentations awards evening was held on 17th June 2025 in the Portland Arms. The evening was compered by local comedian and organiser and presenter of the Cambridge Fringe Comedy Weekend, Ali Warwood.

Our thanks to Sam and his team at the Portland Arms for looking after the event, and for providing beers from local breweries; Moonshine, Lord Conrad, Papworth, and Buntingford. Our thanks also to Hayley for the magnificent buffet!

The Awards

Traditional Beer Champions Dark Ale (City) - Winner: The Maypole

No strangers to winning awards, the Castiglione family, who have run this city centre pub since 1982, bought the freehold from Punch Taverns in 2009. It has since become a showcase for quality beers. The family has won two Branch Real Ale Champion awards, first Vincent on his own in 2010 and then the whole family in 2024. The eight cask beers on the main bar are conveniently arranged from pale to dark. They include LocAles, with an emphasis on microbreweries. This award is given for their dedication to dark ale, of which there are always generally two or more available.

Traditional Beer Champion Dark Ale (Rural) - Winner: Rose & Crown, Impington

In Autumn 2024 the Rose and Crown pub freehold was purchased by Individual Pub Company, sister company to Milton Brewery. After refurbishment, including relocating the cellar, it reopened in early November. Its six handpumps currently offer a range of Milton beers one of which is always a dark ale

LocAle Pub of the Year– Rural - Winner Rose & Crown, Impington

We designate the Locale title to any pub that consistently serves beer from one or more local breweries. As an outlet for Milton Brewery beers, the Rose and Crown was a shoo-in for this year's award

LocAle Pub of the Year (City) - Winner: Geldart

The Geldart has an excellent reputation both for its food and its drink. The larger room to the right is mainly for diners and functions. To the left of the entrance is the drinker's side with eight beers and a wide selection of malt whiskies and rums. The changing guest beers are from smaller breweries. The Geldart is one of the few Cambridge Pubs that consistently sells beer from Fulbourn based Moonshine Brewery

Most Improved Pub of the Year (City) - Winner: Live and Let Live

The "Live" is a pub for contemplation, conversation and beer and cider consumption. Oakham Citra is its regular beer. A Nethergate brewery beer usually also features on their six handpumps and there's always a dark beer. The enthusiasm given by landlord Adam and his staff ensures that customers are sure to return.

Most Improved Pub of the Year (Rural) - Winner: Waggon & Horses, Cottenham

Having been closed since the start of the pandemic, the pub reopened with new owners in November 2024 following significant refurbishment. The "Waggon" has a clean, bright interior with private courtyard to rear. It serves two changing real ales sourced from local brewers including Papworth and Milton.

Community Pub of the Year (City) - Winner: Royal Standard

The "Standard" is another multi - award winning Pub. It was our Cider Pub of the Year in 2023 and

was voted City LocAle Pub in 2024. A community pub in every sense, Martin and his team welcome families, dogs and customers from all walks of life. It is also a favourite meeting of many local publicans. Charitable works include collections and events to raise funds for the Air Ambulance, Addenbrookes Hospital and Cancer UK.

Community Pub of the Year (Rural) - Winner: Three Tuns, Fen Drayton

In 2019 the Three Tuns was purchased from Greene King by a village resident who renovated it and persuaded a popular former licensee couple, Lois and Francis to return. It is very much the heart of the village. It is family friendly. The beer garden includes a large children's play area. Locally sourced food has a good reputation for quality and price with a 10% discount for Armed Forces, RSPB (it sits beside Fen Drayton Lakes nature reserve) and CAMRA members. The Three Tuns was given a CAMRA Lockdown Community Award in 2020.

Young Members Pub of the Year - Winner: Blue Moon

The Blue Moon takes pride in its inclusivity. It has up to three changing real ales from smaller breweries, and up to twenty craft keg beers, a real cider on handpump; a tap takeover on the first Thursday each month; 90+ gins, alongside a very popular pub quiz, a comedy night on the second Tuesday, an open mic night on the last Thursday of each month and live music at weekends. It's perhaps not surprising that Sophie and her colleagues are winning this award for the fourth time! Cambridge & District Branch Young Members' Pub of the Year 2020, 2022 & 2023

Cambridge CAMRA Beer Festival: Beer of the Festival - Winner: 'Tis but a scratch. Buntingford Brewery

Cambridge CAMRA Beer Festival: Cider and Perry of the Festival - Winner: Cuckoo Returns. Blue Barrel, Oakington

Special Award Winners

Towards the end of the awards evening, just before we announce the major category award winners; those that can go on to win further awards at county and regional level, we like to recognise and thank publicans and volunteers who in our view have excelled in their trade, and who have given that little extra in supporting real ale and local pubs. We are listing the award winners here. A more detailed article explaining why they deserve the awards will be in our next issue, Ale 414

Real Ale Champions Award given to:

- **Hayley and Steve Pellegrini** (Portland Arms, The Castle Inn, The Alex, and Hudson's Alehouse.
- **Jess Clausen** (Elm Tree),
- **Linda and Chris Warren** (Bank, Willingham)
- **Clive Coole** (Cambridge CAMRA)

Lifetime Achievement Award

- **Derek and Julie Stearn** (Formerly Kings Head, Fen Ditton),
- **Will Wright** (Formerly White Horse Swavesey)
- **Ava and Alan Hewitt** (Formerly White Horse, Milton),
- **Mary and Phil Cole** (The Bell, Balsham)

The Cambridge CAMRA Awards 2025 continued

The Major awards

Club of the Year - Winner: Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club

The club is a smart and comfortable modern, single-story building with adjoining bowling green and car park. It has a main hall, often used for events and functions, and a smaller room for drinking and chatting. The club has many active members making it a very sociable place. Non-members making a small donation will be signed in. Always a source of well-kept real ale, this club excels itself at its annual beer festival in September. Cambridge & District CAMRA Club of the Year 2017, 2018, 2019 & 2020.

Rural Cider Pub of the Year - Winner: Black Horse, Rampton

Since Ella and Joe took over in 2023, the Black Horse has confirmed a reputation for the quality of its beers and locally produced cider. Locally produced Foxhay cider is available on the bar.

Cider and Perry Pub of the Year (Overall Winner) and County Cider and Perry Pub of the Year - Winner: Devonshire Arms

Rescued from decline and opened in 2010 as Milton Brewery's first pub in Cambridge. Just off Mill Road, the “Dev” attracts a mix of characters for beer, food and a chat. A large selection of, mostly local, real ciders, over 40 when I last counted, plus a small number of widely available fruit syrup ciders makes this pub a deserved winner of both Branch and County titles

Rural Pub of the Year - Winner: Red Lion, Swaffham Prior

Attractive 17th century country pub in the centre of the village. There are steps up to the front door,with the brick faced main bar facing you when you enter. It sits on a red and cream tiled floor. Exposed ceiling and wall beams. To the left is a spacious dining area, to the right a cosy public bar with open fire and TV. The village's two churches in the same churchyard can be seen from the high-level enclosed rear garden. Four handpumps offer Batemans beers, including Two Churches house beer, Dark M, and at least one guest beer. Home cooked, simple but tasty food is available at most sessions. Occasional live music. Seasonal opening hours. Pub tenants, Lana and John took over in mid-October 2023, and have made it a must go to destination pub.

Cambridge CAMRA Pub of the Year (Overall Winner) and County Pub of the Year - Winner: Kingston Arms

After a dodgy spell, the Kingston Arms reopened in March 2023. It is now a proper wet-led back street pub. Old local photos, historic Cambridge Beer Festival posters and breweriana decorate the walls. Pump clips increasingly cover the ceiling. Up to seven cask beers are available including at least one dark one. Four still ciders including real ciders. Cribbage and skittles on Tuesday, and a pub quiz on the last Monday of the month. The Kingston Dons cricket team play on Tuesdays at either Kings or Selwyn College Sports Grounds. The pub runs bi-monthly minibus pub tours. Pork pies and snacks. Plates and cutlery available for drinkers who order in pizzas or other food from local restaurants. Winner of the title County Pub of the Year, the Kingston, now goes on to be one of four pubs with a chance of winning the title East Anglia Region Pub of the Year.

An Elysian view - Loos Interest

Have you ever left a pub musing over how that necessary facility, the loo, had been transformed into something worthy of a conversation piece - in a positive way I hasten to add?

With maybe a few forgettable exceptions, long gone are the days when the urinal in the Gents was a sloping length of rusty guttering and, if you were lucky, there was paper in the cubicle!

Nowadays, to keep punters rolling in, landlords need to do much more than simply focus on liquid sales, important as they most certainly are. Indeed, to be considered for Pub Of The Year, CAMRA lists eight distinct categories to be judged, including cleanliness and hygiene of toilets.

One such meticulous Landlady, Linda of The White Horse, Witcham, is immensely proud of her 'Ladies'. Not only could you eat your dinner off the floor, but it is a work of art styled with a Marilyn Monroe theme, including a mural entirely of black and white photos, a pink platform stiletto shoe seat and an elaborate pink chandelier – worthy of a visit in its own right I would suggest.

Some innovative establishments have gone out of their way to attract attention. Take, for example, The Church Inn, Ludlow which has converted steel ale kegs into three very sturdy urinals. Furthermore, the long Perspex plaque on the wall at eye level reads, "In order to maintain the quality of our real ales, we would request that Ale drinkers use the left side of the urinal, Stout,Cider & Lager drinkers, the right, and all others the middle. This helps avoid cross-contamination on the way back to the barrel. Thank you." No doubt a reflection of the landlord's wicked sense of humour!

Looking even further afield, you've got to hand it to the Aussies. Some years ago, I discovered a bar in Sydney where the urinals were quite remarkable. Four giant, illuminated Guinness style glass WCs, each nearly as tall as the beamed ceiling, projected a surreal, sci-fi image.

On entering one, somewhat apprehensively, I had visions of The Starship Enterprise, half expecting Scotty to beam me up to Dublin. A far cry from the rickety old wooden thunderbox 'Dunny' in the outback!

So, next time you need to skip to the loo in an unfamiliar watering hole, you just might be in for a surprise.

Bruce Patten

Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

Last issue's mystery lost pub was on the corner of John Street and Adam & Eve Row, and had two names over the course of its existence, both related to the man in charge at the time.

It first appears in 1852 and was known as the **Coachmakers Arms**, appropriately enough as the owner, William Wilderspin, also had a coachbuilding business on Regent Street.

In 1857 he delegated the running of the pub to Thomas Billing, a carpenter from Fair Street, who had been declared bankrupt two years previously. Whether that proved to be a sound business decision is unknown.

Following William's death two years later, his widow, Ann, picked up all his business activities, going into partnership with her brother, and William's former associate, Edmund Ambrose in the coachbuilding business, and it seems on her own in the pub. Her son, confusingly called Ambrose, also worked in the coachbuilding side of the operation, which promised "Repairs neatly and promptly executed"; "Bodies made for the trade"; and "Invalid chairs and perambulators on sale or hire".

On 18 June 1864 the coachbuilding partnership was dissolved by mutual consent, all assets of the business were handed over in trust for the benefit of creditors, and bankruptcy followed, at least for Edmund. Ann seems to have escaped that ignominious fate and continued to hold and run the pub, which doubled up as a grocer's. At some point in the following couple of years it seems that she both remarried and was again widowed, because in the 1871 census she appears as Ann Nunn.

She seems to have had an untroubled tenure, only two incidents attracting the attention of the magistrates. First, in 1873 George Wright, a labourer from Cherryhinton, went into the house and called for some ale. As Ann returned from drawing it she noticed him pocketing a piece of butter. "She took hold of him and told him to give it up, when he threw it on the counter and said he only took it in a joke. In trying to escape he broke a window."

The Mayor took a very dim view of this little jape, believing that there had been intent to steal anything he could lay his hands on, and the low value of his prize was no mitigation. George was landed with three months' imprisonment, with hard labour. Shoplifters today don't know they're born…

Some eleven years later, Augustus Pearson, "an old man", was charged with stealing a pair of spectacles, valued at 1s. 6d., from the taproom; he was found by a police officer the following day using them to read a newspaper. He claimed that he must have picked them up by mistake, and a generous Bench gave him the benefit of the doubt and discharged him.

Following Ann's death in 1886 the pub was put up for sale, and was described as having a "bar, tap-room, parlour, two bed-rooms, capital cellars, kitchen, and detached w.c." – fancy!

The lucky purchaser was a Mr T B Kingsnorth, who picked it up for £380. Shortly afterwards it became part of the estate of Philip Llewellyn Hudson's Pampisford Brewery. Then followed the familiar rapid churn of licensees for the next couple of years until 1888 and the arrival of Patrick Canty, previously of the Tiger, East Road, along with a change of name.

As his name suggests, Patrick was an Irishman, born in County Kerry in around 1826. He began life as a blacksmith farrier, but before he had reached his seventeenth birthday he enlisted in what was then known as the 1st Regiment of the 14th Foot Yorkshire Regiment, stationed in

Ireland at the time. He went on to serve in the Crimean War with great distinction, being present at both the Alma (1854) and Sebastopol (1854/5).

At Sebastopol, despite being wounded himself, he distinguished himself by rescuing a French general and carrying him to a place of safety, for which he was awarded France's prestigious *Légion d'honneur*.

After the Crimean War Canty crossed the Pond, first to the United States and then to Canada, where he joined the Militia and served for three years. Eventually he returned to settle in Bradford, taking on his first pub, and then moved to Cambridge.

With Canty's arrival the name of the pub changed to the **Crown and Harp**, the emblem of many Irish regiments at the time. We can only assume that this was in honour of his illustrious military career.

Patrick died in 1906, at the ripe old age of 80, and following a service at the Catholic Church was buried in Mill Road Cemetery, joining his wife and three of his children who had predeceased him. Their headstone is still just about visible, near the east wall of the cemetery, but it is gradually being swallowed up by ivy and other vegetation.

His son, Stephen 'Steve' Patrick Canty, a boxer of some repute, apparently, gave up his job as a printer/compositor to run the pub for the next five years. The 1911 census also includes one Daniel Wilderspin as barman, but he doesn't seem to be directly related to William.

The next notable, and long-lasting, incumbent is Charles Coombs, previously of the Black Bird, East Road, who held the reins from 1913 to 1923. This lengthy tenure didn't get off to a great start as within a year he was charged with assaulting the wife of one of his customers. There was a counter-charge against the woman in question, Mrs Rebecca Hunt, for being disorderly and refusing to leave the premises. The trial was reported on at some length by the *Cambridge Independent Press* (13 March 1914).

Evidence is conflicting, as the magistrates themselves noted, but what seems to have happened is that Mrs Hunt was a little annoyed that her husband, James, was in the pub rather than at home (at 7.25 p.m.), and sent her son to go and fetch him. She went herself a quarter of an hour later, at which point James, apparently on the advice of the landlord, sloped out. But Rebecca wasn't satisfied and proceeded to remonstrate with Coombs, complaining about how he would encourage her husband to stay there all day (which he denied), and there was much unladylike language used. Not surprisingly, Coombs asked her to leave, which she refused to do, and so he came out from behind the bar and had to prise her hand from the door so that he could push her out. He slammed the door behind her, and she (claiming she had had her legs kicked from under her, which Coombs denied and no one else corroborated), fell onto the path outside, where a chivalrous passer-by came to her aid and suggested she sue.

Acknowledging that force had indeed been used, the magistrates determined that it had not been beyond what was permissible to a publican when having to eject someone from the premises, and so the case was dismissed; the counter-charge was then dropped.

After that Coombs seems to have had peaceful tenure.

Cecil Rowell had a go for a couple of years. He was of the famous farming and sporting Rowell family of Chesterton, grandson of Michael Rowell (Scales Hotel) and nephew of Jack Rowell, former Cambridge United captain and landlord of the Hopbine (*ALE* 407's Lost Pub). But hospitality doesn't seem to have been in his blood and he later turned his hand to being a painter and decorator.

During the reign of John Henry Jones (1928 to

Lost pubs of Cambridge(shire)

1929), the place became a centre for boxing, with someone called Jack Stanley making the place his headquarters as he prepared to fight Scandinavian champion John Wid in Stockholm. Other names which may mean something to historians of the noble art include Gilbert Stubbings, Buttons Taylor, Gammy Smith, Jock McCann, Archie Allen – these and many more all sparred and trained at the Crown & Harp, and the public were encouraged to come along to watch.

And that is about it for excitement. The next 25 years saw four more landlords, the last of whom, John Gerald Ingram, lasted 15 years. The pub finally closed its doors in 1955, after which it became the new home of the Cambridge Christian Spiritualist Church. I wonder if they were ever joined by the ghost of Barnie Sanders, who in 1939 had collapsed and died in the pub immediately after ordering a glass of stout...

The next mystery pub is one some people might actually remember:

Let me know at pub-history@cambridge-camra.org.uk.

Steve Linley

The Blue Moon Music, Beer, Pizza, Gin

2 Norfolk Street, Cambridge
CB1 2LF

Opening Times; Monday-Wednesday 4pm-midnight, Thursday 4pm-1am, Friday 4pm-2am, Saturday 2pm-2am, Sunday 2pm-10.30pm

(01223) 500238
cambridge.pub/blue-moon
bluemooncambridge

A.I. is too important to be left in the hands of machines

The A.I. we're referring to isn't Artificial Intelligence, it's Ale Intelligence, of course. We're not technophobes, we just don't trust anything incapable of smelling, feeling or tasting to create something as delicately balanced as Landlord. That's why we have five hands-on, Heriot-Watt trained brewers involved in every step of the process, from barley delivery to filling the casks. This way, we can make sure that every sip of Taylor's is as delicious as humanly possible. Machines may one day take over the world, just be thankful you won't be around to drink their terrible beer.

All for that taste of Taylor's

DYKE'S END

A Free House in the idyllic village of Reach
Specialising in the best **East of England ales**
Excellent Sunday Roast - booking essential
Beer garden overlooking the village green
Situated at one end of the Devil's Dyke walk
We are dog friendly too!

Dyke's End, 8 Fair Green, Reach, Cambs, CB25 OJD
E / dykesendpub@gmail.com
T / 01638 743816
Open: Tue - Fri 5pm-10pm, Sat 12pm-10pm,
Sun 12pm-9pm

Apples and Pears

CAMRA East Anglia Region Cider Pub of The Year 2025

The winner of this year's award is the **Blackfriars Tavern** in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. They beat off some stiff opposition: Our very own **Devonshire Arms**, representing Cambridgeshire; the **Railway Arms** in Saffron Walden, representing Essex, and the **Steamboat**, Ipswich, who represented Suffolk, to progress through to the National Finals. We wish the Blackfriars every success.

I, and Ali Cook ventured out to survey all the above pubs - in the line of duty, of course. Well, somebody had to do it didn't they? Why not us!? You can read about the **Devonshire Arms** in Cambridge CAMRA Awards: Winners all (page ?) so I'll report on our visits to the other pubs.

We couldn't have picked better weather for our first excursion. I picked Ali up on Tuesday the 29th of April, I reckon it was the hottest day of the year so far - perfect weather for a trip to the seaside. We made incredibly good time, in fact too good, as we arrived before the pub had opened. We decided to have a quick saunter out to the pier and seafront for a coffee and some people watching before heading back to the Blackfriars. I'd never been to this pub before, Ali had visited it previously, when casting his vote for the County Real Ale Pub of the Year. I have to say it was excellent. The staff were very knowledgeable and knew their ciders – for those that weren't so familiar, they had an amazing matrix to lead people to the type of cider they were likely to prefer. They also had electronic display screens rotating through the ciders and beers they had available. Ali sampled a few different ciders. As I was steering, it was just the one half for me.

We also thought it wise to eat at this stage – a good choice, as the food was very good, and extremely well priced.

From here, I set the Satnav in the direction of Ipswich, to the **Steamboat**.

The pub is in an excellent location on the quayside overlooking the 'New Cut' of the river Orwell. There were benches and tables outside in a secluded and popular garden. Customers also took advantage of the harbour wall to the front of the pub, which offered views towards the town centre and Marina. The cider offering here was not as extensive as the Blackfriars, I think they only had four options to choose from. The one I tasted was fine, but a tad too cold for my liking. I think Ali tried two or three and agreed that they were all slightly too cold.

The route back to the A14 from here was very straightforward, so within a few minutes, we were heading home.

We completed our tour on the following Thursday (1 st May), and if anything, it was an even hotter day than on our first trip. Ali had done a bit of research into this one, so with 'old git' bus passes to hand, we boarded the Citi 7 bus from Emmanuel Street, Cambridge and commenced our 70+ minute journey to the **Railway Arms**, Saffron Walden. The bus was stiflingly hot, but luckily, I'd had the foresight to purchase a bottle of water for the journey. The pub had seven ciders on their menu – four of which were produced by themselves, under the name of Wriggers Ciders. As there was no driving for me on this occasion, I was able to let (what's left) of my hair down and enjoy myself.

During our visit we tried six of the seven ciders. The only one we didn't try was a bottled 'Champagne' style cider, which was selling at £17.50 for a 750ml bottle (us pensioners must be careful with our money). Having successfully worked our way through the list it was time to get our bus back. The thoughts of another 70-minute bus ride didn't really bear thinking about, so we decided to break our journey with a stop in the Three Horseshoes, Stapleford for a cheeky pint.

We arrived in Cambridge in time to join up with our colleagues at the Cambridge Cider & Perry Club Meeting. A tale for another day!

Wassail!, Jerry Ladell

LEGENDARY BEER FROM HERTFORDSHIRE

- DRAUGHT & BOTTLED BEER (INCLUDING PARTY SIZES)
- T-SHIRTS, GIFTS & GOODIES
- GIFT VOUCHERS
- GOLDEN TOAD MEMBERSHIP
- LOCAL PRODUCE
- BREWERY TOURS
- CIDER AND SPIRITS

ORDER ONLINE >>

In 2025 our Monthly Specials are raising funds and awareness for The Repair Shed

TRING BREWERY Co.

Dunsley Farm, London Road, Tring HP23 6HA

01442 890721 www.tringbrewery.co.uk

THE Royal Standard

RE-ESTABLISHED 2015

Cambridge CAMRA City LocAle Pub of the Year 2024, Cambridge CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year 2023

Opening Hours: Monday-Saturday noon-11pm, Sunday noon-10.30pm. Food Served Everyday from noon until 9.30pm

Home of Cambridge's largest selection of draught Belgian beer, Real Cider, local and regional Real Ale and UK craft beer.

Working with the original TZATZIKI to provide Cambridge with the best Greek street food.

292 Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 3NL

cambridge.pub/royal-standard

01223 5669065

GOOD BEER GUIDE 2026 WE'RE IN IT

A Game of Chess, Mate?

A summery Saturday afternoon in Ely is a fine time to visit the **West End House**, slightly out of town, but well worth the 5 minute walk. I meet friend Simon and we enter the cosy, low ceilinged main bar. We are greeted quickly by the bartender and there is a choice of 4 real ales today. Simon goes for Lacons Encore (3.8%). It's Timothy Taylor Golden Best (3.4%) for me. Both are served bright and frothy in the correct branded glasses – something which always impresses me, a small attention to detail.

I am not usually an outdoor type, but Simon is very much the explorer and his desire to go outside holds sway. The rear garden is half busy, but there's still plenty of choice of a shaded or open setting for the battle that we are about to commence. The garden is lovely, the beer super – but what we really came for is a mental pursuit, the age old mystery of chess. It takes a few minutes to set up – I still have my magnetic board from childhood. The feeling is already odd, we are a bit self-conscious that other drinkers will smirk at us while we play our little game!

Here are the first half dozen or so moves:
1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 a6 3.c3 Nc6 4.d3 d6 5.Be3 Bg4 6.Be2 e6 7. 0-0 Nf6 8.h3 With my eighth move I intend to scare Simon's bishop away, but he then does this: 8… h5! Simon, already buoyed by playing outside, is obviously not intending to hang around and is offering me his bishop. Perhaps mellowed by my sweet fruity best bitter, I cannot refuse and take the bait. The West End really does boast a delightful, almost tropical, back garden. The patio is surrounded by ivy, grapevines and even I am told, some date palm. What a pleasure to play in this retreat.

9. hxg4 hxg4 10. Nbd2? gxf3 11. Nxf3 Ng4 12. Bf4 Qf6 13. Bg3 Qh6 14. Nh4 Ne3! (Simon on the attack again.) 15. fxe3 Qxe3+ 16. Bf2 Qg5 I have possibly managed to weather the storm, but have not set foot in black's half of the board yet. 17. Qe1 Ne5 18. Rd1 Ng6 19. Nxg6 Qxg6 20. Bf3 Qh7. With Simon's 20th move I am back in real trouble and I am scrambling around to stay alive. He now has a completely open line along the h-file to attack my king. One false move and it is game over.

The sun comes out brightly and a low throaty warble from a blackbird from its rooftop perch tells us that it is time for another pint. Simon goes for a repeat Encore, loving its crisp, citrussy bite. I choose another Timothy Taylor, the 4% Boltmaker this time which I find slightly spicy; sat in the garden playing chess – what a beautiful copper pint, truly a best bitter! After a sip Simon enjoys telling me that a blackbird in Latin is Turdus Merula and we resume battle…

21. Bg3 0-0-0 22. Kf2 Be7 23. b4 Bh4 24. Ke2 Bxg3 25. Qxg3 f5 26. bxc5 g5?! 27. exf5 exf5 28. Rb1 Qe7+ 29. Kd2 d5 30. c6 Rd6 31. Rxb7 Qf6 32. Rfb1 Rhd8. Having now survived Simon's early onslaught, I press forward: 33. Rb8+ Kc7 34. Rxd8 Qxd8 35. Bxd5 f4 36. Rb7+ Kc8 37. Qg4+ Rd7 38. cxd7+ Qxd7 39. Qxd7#

On the 39th move, I eventually strangle Simon's king. There is no applause from a gallery of onlookers. In fact, nobody is at all interested in us at all. And why should they be? People at other tables are basking in the early Summer sunshine, certainly enjoying their drinks. Some are casually scrolling through images or chatter on their phones. A small family with several shopping bags sits together and while one child reads a new picture book, the other starts to make a little Lego F1 car. (Ely has some great independent shops as well as its pubs!). It has been so nice. We really should do this more often. And we are already thinking about the next time.

Fred Laband

Midlands Meanderings: Walsall revisited

A spare afternoon gave me an opportunity to return to Walsall, which I last meandered two years previously – almost to the very day, I discovered later. See ALE 403 for my report on that pleasantly surprising pub crawl around the town of my birth. This one was shorter, just a quick check of the three pubs that I had been particularly pleased to discover back then.

First stop was again the New Inn or Pretty Bricks, a cozy Black Country Ales pub which gets its nickname from the glazed brick frontage. I went through to the more comfortable back bar to quench my thirst with a decent if not outstanding pint of BCA Pig on the Wall. A nice pub, a bit out of the way but worth seeking out.

Next was the Fountain, which stands rather forlorn at the top of a hill with all around it demolished like an oasis of beer. I really like this pub: family-run, free house, community orientated, and (of course) excellent beer. Two years ago I sat in the relatively bright and spartan left-hand room; this time I went round to the larger and more comfortable lounge-type room, decorated with old photos, mirrors, and breweriana like this:

My tipple of choice was Green Duck Duckwork Orange which, as you can probably guess from the name, was a chocolate orange stout. And it was absolutely lovely! So of course I had to stay for a second. It was hard to drag myself away.

And finally to the Victoria, where last time I had been so impressed with the Church End Gravediggers (and the onion rings). Before I could check that the quality of the Gravediggers was being maintained, I was distracted by another Green Duck beer, Beeze Neeze, a chocolate and honey stout, which simply had to be tried. And, well, it was a bit … weird, I have to say.

In my previous report I noted with approval the Waldorf & Statler figures proudly sat in one window. Well, here they are:

The Beeze Neeze might have affected my tastebuds a little, because when I finally got my Gravediggers it didn't taste quite as good as last time. Maybe I should have started with it.

And that was all I had time for today. An enjoyable flying visit, mustn't leave it another two years before I return. In fact I will probably be back in the Fountain at least by the time you're reading this.

Steve Linley

Paws for thought

Great news everybody! I am now officially in charge of the Cambridge CAMRA beer festival membership team. My male human admitted that he was struggling with fitting in all his CAMRA duties and asked me if I'd like to have a go.

Here I am chairing our first team meeting.

Of course, I didn't give up my original duties – I had lots of photos taken with visitors to the festival.

This is Alan. He spotted me when he first came into the main tent. I asked him about his hat and the blue monkey brewery. I'd noticed that all his friends were wearing the same hat. He told me that the brewery is in Nottingham, but unfortunately, he didn't have anything to do with it. "We wear them so that we can spot each other in the crowd." What a good idea! I need to get one. I am only eighteen inches tall. A hat would almost double my height.

This next picture is of Leah and Jake. They saw me looking after the CAMRA membership stand, too. Hasn't Leah got a lovely smile? Almost as nice as mine!

Just a few more from the festival; This is with Steve. Steve was a volunteer. He came over especially to have his photo taken.

I really liked this lady. She was determined to give me a proper cuddle! Unfortunately, my bungling human neglected to ask her name. I think it was Te-hanna. Sorry if I got that wrong.

The wonderings of a pub going dog

This lady is called Jaimie.

Regular visitors to the Cambridge beer festival will know that the membership team looks after two stands. One at the entrance and one just inside the main tent. As organiser it is my job to walk backwards and forwards to both, just to make sure everything is ok.

Jaimie recognised me and asked if we could take a photo with all her friends. Here it is!

My new role has given me the chance to get to know a lot of important people from CAMRA. Could I introduce you to John? He is the Branch Chair of the Oxford Branch of CAMRA.

I met this next lady at Hitchin Beer Festival. Her name is Emma Haines. Like me she is a writer and editor. She works on the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, and is very important indeed.

I still manage to get some time to visit my fans though. These male humans are from Kings College, Cambridge. They are known as the Kingsmen. They had just stopped off in their world tour to perform in the Kingston Arms. They didn't say so, but I think they also came to visit me.

Their friend Evie was especially pleased to see me. We were inseparable for the whole evening!

Woof for now,
Gladys
Emmanuelle

The Cambridge Blue

A Real Ale Paradise

up to 14 cask ales on hand pump or straight from the cask, plus 12 world beers on tap, and 120 bottled beers, and real cider as well!

Opening Hours
noon-11pm Monday–Saturday
and noon-10.30pm on Sunday

Food Service
Sunday–Thursday noon-9.30pm
Friday & Saturday noon-10pm

85-87 Gwydir Street, Cambridge
CB1 2LG **01223 471680**
the-cambridgeblue.co.uk
TheCambridgeBlue
@Cambridge_Blue

0.5% NEW

0.5% NEW

AN ALCOHOL FREE AMERICAN PALE

FOR WHEN YOU WANT BIG TASTE WITHOUT THE BOOZE. AVAILABLE IN 500ML BOTTLE.

BISHOPNICK.COM

The Three Tuns
Fen Drayton

Sounds of Summer

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY

LIVE MUSIC

Best Music @ The 3 Tuns Beer Garden

JUNE TO AUG
FRI
6PM TO 8PM

www.threetunsfendrayton.co.uk
01954 230242